

What is claimed is:

1. A backlight comprising:

a source of diffuse light; and

5 a light transmissive film having a structured surface, said structured surface being on a side of said film facing said source of diffuse light such that said film directs light from said source of diffuse light into a plurality of primary intensity lobes in different directions.

10 2. The backlight of claim 1 wherein said light source includes a light guide.

3. The backlight of claim 2 wherein said light guide has the form of a slab.

4. The backlight of claim 1 wherein said light guide has a first input surface.

15 5. The backlight of claim 4 wherein said light source further includes a first cold cathode fluorescent tube adjacent said first input surface.

6. The backlight of claim 5 wherein said light guide further includes a second input 20 surface and said light source further includes a second cold cathode fluorescent tube adjacent said second input surface.

7. The backlight of claim 6 wherein said second input surface is adjacent said first input surface.

25 8. The backlight of claim 6 wherein said second input surface is parallel to said first input surface.

9. The backlight of claim 6 wherein said light guide further includes a third input surface

and said light source further includes a third cold cathode fluorescent tube adjacent said third input surface.

10. The backlight of claim 2 wherein said light guide has the form of a wedge.

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11. The backlight of claim 2 wherein said light source further includes a light emitting diode.

12. The backlight of claim 1 wherein said light source includes an electroluminescent panel.

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13. The backlight of claim 1 wherein said film directs light into two primary intensity lobes.

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14. The backlight of claim 1 wherein said film directs light into four primary intensity lobes.

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15. The backlight of claim 1 wherein said structured surface has triangular prisms thereon.

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16. The backlight of claim 15 wherein said triangular prisms have the shape of isosceles triangles.

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17. The backlight of claim 16 wherein said prisms are right isosceles prisms.

18. An electronic display comprising

a source of diffuse light;

a film having a structured surface, said structured surface being on a side of said film opposite of said source of diffuse light such that said film directs light from said source of diffuse light into a plurality of primary intensity lobes in different directions; and

a light valve.

19. The electronic display of claim 18 wherein said light valve is a liquid crystal display.